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MONTHLY LETTER OF THE BUREAU OF ENTOMOLOGY
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Number 137

September, 1925

DEATH OF DOCTOR W. D. HUNTER

As this letter was going to press word was received that Dr. W. D. Hunter, Senior Entomologist, in Charge of Southern Field Crop Insect Investigations and member of the Federal Horticultural Board, died suddenly of apoplexy at 6.45 p. m., October 13, at El Paso, Texas.

TRUCK-CROP INSECT INVESTIGATIONS

J. E. Graf, Entomologist, in Charge

J. E. Graf visited the Eastern Shore of Virginia in the latter part of September to go over the tuber moth situation with various officials representing the experiment station, State Entomologist's office, and potato growers' association. A half day was spent in field inspection to obtain an idea of the infestation under field conditions and the possible factors which make it unusually heavy in the present season. After going over local conditions carefully, those present undertook to draw up suggestions for cultural measures to reduce the insect. Representatives from Virginia included Messrs. Johnson, Schoene, and Strong, while Professor Cory and Mr. Sanders were present from Maryland. Mr. Ralston represented the truck growers of the Eastern Shore.

B. L. Boyden visited Sanford, Fla., to discuss the celery leaf-tyer problem with Dr. E. D. Ball, who is in charge of the investigations of this insect for the State Plant Board. Cooperative measures were discussed in a preliminary way, and further action will be taken along this line at a conference of various organizations interested in the celery worm, to be held at Sanford on October 5.

In an inspection trip of the Ochocho Irrigation Project in the Deschutes Valley, Walter Carter visited Prineville, Oreg., to gather information as to the presence of the sugar-beet leafhopper in this area, and the possible effect on sugar-beet culture. The sugar beet was originally planned as one of the main crops for this area.

The temporary appointments of the following employees were terminated in September: Messrs. DeLong, Beerman, Weatherby, Martin, and Roberts. Messrs. Merrill and Dunavan resigned to enter other fields.

FOREST INSECT INVESTIGATIONS

F. C. Craighead, Entomologist, in Charge

Dr. Craighead has returned to the office after an extended trip inspecting field laboratories and control projects. The work at Asheville, N. C., Bogalusa, La., Petersham, Mass., and the Kaibab and Bitterroot National Forests was visited during the summer.

William Middleton left for Asheville September 14 for a two weeks' trip to assist in the studies of the southern pine beetle at that point. Several local outbreaks in the vicinity of Asheville afford unusual opportunities for detailed study.

In the latter part of September R. A. St. George left Asheville, where he has been detailed for the summer, proceeding to Bogalusa, La. He will make an examination of experimental studies being conducted on lands of the Great Southern Lumber Company, and will also meet several representatives of the Texas Mill Managers' Association to discuss means of assisting on problems in Texas.

Continued and alarming reports are being received of extensive bark-beetle damage throughout the Southern States. In some cases the southern pine beetle has been responsible but in eastern Texas the damage seems to be due to the continuation of the unusual drought of last year. The timberland owners in this State are making urgent appeals for assistance.

The field activities have about closed in most of the western stations and the men are returning to the permanent headquarters at Palo Alto, Calif., and Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. J. M. Miller reports that following the unusual drought of last year more timber has died from the attack of the western pine beetle than on any previous occasion in his observations of the last 15 years.

Dr. T. E. Snyder reports that studies of specimens of Reticulitermes flavipes Kol. from Illinois and Arkansas indicate that they may be a race morphologically close to R. lucifugus Rossi of Europe. Specimens of lucifugus in France appear to be close to flavipes. Since the original habitat of flavipes is not definitely known (either Mexico, the United States, or Europe), further study of the morphology and biology of these races may prove interesting. R. flavipes and R. lucifugus occur both in the United States and in Europe.

BEE CULTURE INVESTIGATIONS

James I. Hambleton, Apiculturist, in Charge

Lloyd M. Bertholf and Carlton E. Burnside have resigned their temporary appointments as Junior Biologists. Mr. Bertholf has returned to his duties as Professor of Biology at Western Maryland College, and Mr. Burnside has resumed his graduate work at the University of Michigan.

In September James I. Hambleton participated in beekeepers' meetings held in Tennessee, North Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama. One of these, that at Charlotte, N. C., on September 10 and 11, was a union meeting of beekeepers from North and South Carolina. He also attended a conference at Medina, Ohio, in regard to the establishment of grading rules for comb honey.

E. L. Sechrist is visiting western comb honey producers for the purpose of securing first-hand data relative to problems connected with the grading of comb honey.

Visitors at the Bee Culture Laboratory during the past month included Dr. E. F. Phillips, of Cornell University, and Prof. E. N. Cory, State Entomologist of Maryland.

SOUTHERN FIELD-CROP INSECT INVESTIGATIONS

J. L. Webb, Associate Entomologist, Acting in Charge

T. E. Holloway, who was acting in charge of this Branch during Mr. Webb's absence on a field trip, returned September 14 to his field laboratory at New Orleans. Mr. Webb returned to Washington on September 12.

H. E. Brundrett, who for several years has been attached to the Dallas, Tex., field laboratory, engaged in investigations of insects affecting domestic animals, resigned on September 15 to take the position of Professor of Horticulture at John Tarlton College, Stevensville, Tex.

As the army airplanes at Tallulah, La., are temporarily unserviceable, an airplane has been loaned for a short period by a commercial company so that certain studies in airplane poisoning may be completed. Eugene Stevens and Art Gray have received temporary appointments as Airplane Pilot and Airplane Mechanic, respectively, to operate this airplane.

K. B. McKinney and J. U. Gilmore, of the Tobacco Insect Laboratory, and H. E. Wallace and T. E. McNeel, of the Mound, La., laboratory, have been transferred temporarily to the Federal Horticultural Board, to assist in scouting work for the pink bollworm.

The appointments of the following temporary field assistants who have been engaged in boll weevil control work were terminated during the month: J. H. Adams, W. W. Brunson, J. E. Culpepper, C. Graham, J. H. Kyzar, C. W. Loden, R. Melvin, O. L. Turman, J. C. Wilkerson, W. H. Wilson, H. E. Woodruff, J. A. Bradley, J. F. Cooper, C. G. Latham, J. M. Lewis, G. E. McDaniel, E. H. McLaughlin, E. R. Purvis, J. W. Wilson, and A. McF. Woodside.

GIPSY MOTH AND BROWN-TAIL MOTH INVESTIGATIONS

A. F. Burgess, Senior Entomologist, in Charge

A. F. Burgess spent a few days in Washington, D. C., in the week of September 28, and on that date attended the satin moth quarantine hearing.

During the week of September 14, H. L. Blaisdell and S. S. Crossman made an inspection tour of the Barrier Zone from Pittsfield, Mass., north to the Canadian border, and visited some areas west of the Barrier Zone in the State of New York. L. E. Gibson and H. N. Bean, of the Scouting and Extermination Project, accompanied them on part of this trip. At Pittsfield a conference was held with H. L. McIntyre, of the New York State Conservation Commission.

J. V. Schaffner and H. I. Winchester, of the laboratory force, recently made a trip into northern New Jersey and the central and northern parts of New York, collecting native larvae, to determine the distribution of some of the introduced parasites of the gipsy moth (Porthetria dispar). One species has been recovered well beyond the gipsy moth dispersion line, and another one has been recovered from within the barrier zone.

R. T. Webber and P. B. Dowden, who have been investigating the gipsy moth and the brown-tail moth and their natural enemies in central Europe during the last six months, returned to the gipsy moth laboratory at Melrose Highlands on September 4. Forest areas and entomologists were visited in Germany, Poland, Austria, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, and Roumania. No infestations of sufficient intensity to allow for the carrying on of parasite introduction work were found in any of these countries except Hungary and Czechoslovakia. The areas in Poland and Hungary where gipsy moth parasite work was conducted the previous year were practically free of gipsy moth infestations this year, and new infested areas had to be found. Suitable infestations were located at Baja in the southern part of Hungary and at Bilky in northeastern Czechoslovakia. At these points temporary laboratories were established where parasite work was conducted during the season; from 300,000 to 400,000 gipsy moth larvae and pupae were handled at each of these locations and several fine parasite importations were made. As a result of this work, together with the work conducted by S. M. Dohanian in Spain and Portugal, approximately 40,000 tachinids have been placed in hibernation at the laboratory at Melrose and over 5,000 adults of multibrooded tachinids were liberated in gipsy moth infestations in New England during this summer. In addition to the tachinid material received, about 14,500 A. vitripennis were liberated in New England. Of this number, 1,500 adults were liberated directly after they had been brought by T. H. Jones from Europe to Melrose Highlands. The other 13,000 were obtained at the Melrose Laboratory by breeding several generations on gipsy moth larvae, using European adult parasites for the original stock. Eight species of tachinids, six species of Hymenoptera, and three species of Coleoptera were involved in the European work this season.

TAXONOMIC INVESTIGATIONS

S. A. Rohwer, Entomologist, in Charge

Dr. Wm. Barnes, of Decatur, Ill., recently spent several days in the Division of Insects comparing types and consulting with specialists in Lepidoptera.

Major Harry A. Davis, who is in charge of mosquito investigations of the Army Medical Museum, visits the Division every two weeks to consult with Dr. Dyar and have specimens identified.

Professor Clarence H. Kennedy and Professor James S. Hine, of the Ohio State University, visited the Division of Insects on their return from England, where they have been examining types in the British Museum (Natural History). Professor Hine spent some time conferring with Dr. Aldrich and studying the collection of horse flies. Professor Kennedy examined the collection of Odonata, spending considerable time studying the material coming from the Hawaiian Islands. He is preparing a revision of the Odonata of the Hawaiian Islands and has had an opportunity to examine practically all of the types.

Robert J. Sim, of the Japanese Beetle Laboratory, recently spent some time in the Division of Insects studying the collection of Scarabaeidae in an endeavor to identify the species which have been forwarded to the Japanese Beetle Laboratory in connection with the work on the Japanese beetle.

Ernest Shoemaker, of Brooklyn, N. Y., spent a day in the Division, looking over the collection of beetles.

Raymond Shannon returned from Europe September 8. During his trip to Europe he had an opportunity to examine many of the types of Diptera, spending considerable time studying those belonging to the families Syrphidae, Muscidae, Calliphoridae, Culicidae, and Simuliidae. He was able to arrange extensive exchanges with various specialists throughout Europe and brought home nearly 1,000 specimens obtained in that manner. During his trip he collected about 1,000 specimens of flies, and obtained some very interesting records on distribution.

C. F. W. Muesebeck is planning to spend the month of October in the Division of Insects, studying various parasites which have been reared in connection with the investigations of the Gipsy Moth Laboratory, and preparing a revision of the American braconid flies belonging to the subfamily Braconinae.

CEREAL AND FORAGE INSECT INVESTIGATIONS

W. H. Larrimer, Entomologist, in Charge

W. H. Larrimer, W. R. Walton, and L. H. Worthley attended the corn borer conference held at Toledo, Detroit, and Windsor, Ontario, from September 29 to October 1, inclusive. They report a very large attendance and great interest on the part of the officials and others who attended this inspection trip and conference.

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